

THE
BROTHERLY AGREEMENT
AND
DECLARATION,
CONCERNING
The RULES and ORDERS
OF
The Brethren's Congregation,
AT
FULNECK.

Printed in the YEAR 1777.

R21677

WHEREAS it hath pleased God to bring us who are the present inhabitants of this village here together, we cannot but look upon it as necessary to our well-being and useful to our successors, that we agree upon, and commit to writing certain principles and regulations, which have been hitherto in part received and observed by us, and which we believe should be constantly attended to, if the aim of erecting this village and of our coming to dwell in it, shall be obtained.

This congregation was settled in the year 1742, and obtained the privileges and constitution of a congregation of the brethren, belonging to the ancient protestant, episcopal church, known by the name of Unitas Fratrum. It therefore holds the same doctrine, has the same church government, discipline and rites with the said church.

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, which has been bestowed upon us by this means, has not been in vain, though

though we blush at the remembrance of our great backwardness and unworthiness.

He, our Lord Jesus Christ, is the foundation upon which the congregation has been built from the beginning. He alone has brought us together, and is, and must remain our sole bond of union. Blessed be his name, that he has preserved us hitherto upon himself the only rock, and has given unto us endless proofs of his forbearance, mercy, faithfulness and love, that we have been graciously led by the Holy Ghost, and experienced the care and protection of our father in Heaven.

THANKFULNESS to our gracious Lord requires us to shew all watchfulness and take every possible step, which can further his gracious purpose with this his congregation, and prevent whatever may in any wise obstruct his views, with this place and its inhabitants.

ON account of human weakness and imperfection, it is absolutely needful for the attainment of this end, that we establish such regulations as are, according to the doctrine of Christ and his apostles, suited and applicable to the nature of the congregation-place, for a preservation and edification of the whole and each individual.

Besides the general principles, which have been received and inculcated in the Brethren's Congregations, as conformable to godliness, some few rules have been agreed to and established by this congregation in former years, particularly relating to externals; but, as our number has encreased, and consequently the circumstances are become more numerous and diversified, we have resolved to revise and renew our regulations, and in the presence of our Lord, have, and do establish the following principles and orders among us.

I. *The*

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Brotherly Agreement, &c.

I. *The Relation of the Congregation to other Religions.*

THE holy scriptures of the old and new Testament, are and shall remain the only standard and rule both of our doctrine and practice, and we have, in common with the rest of the Brethren's Congregations, in the Unitas Fratrum, approved of the doctrine of the Augustan or Augsburg confession* for no other reason, but because we look upon it as a sound confession of faith, consonant to the holy scriptures. In general, we acknowledge and subscribe to no doctrine, as the doctrine of our congregation, which is not agreeable to the doctrine of Christ and his apostles.

We look upon every truth contained in the holy scriptures, as an inestimable jewel, and would rather lose our lives and property, than deny any one of them: yea, we cannot but consider the denial of any divine truth,

* The Augsburg or Augustan confession, as drawn up by the Protestant divines and presented by the Protestant princes at the dyet of the empire, in the year of our Lord 1530, was used by the English reformers as the ground-work of the thirty-nine articles of the church of England, which were compiled 1562; and these two confessions agree in the essential doctrinal articles.

even with the view of obtaining some good end by so doing, as a great crime.

We will be therefore watchful, and use all diligence, that both the doctrine taught among us and the whole practice of the congregation, be conformable to the doctrine and practice of our Lord and his apostles; and, to this end, we humbly implore the guidance of God the Holy Ghost.

2. We look upon it as an essential character of a congregation of Christ, that the word of God be preached in it in purity and sincerity, and that the congregation and the members thereof walk agreeable thereunto in holiness, as becometh the children of God. We therefore acknowledge every one to be a true brother, or a true fellow member of the body of Christ, that is born of God, through the Holy Ghost.

But whereas this character cannot be confined to any external religious constitution, therefore it is our desire to live in love and harmony with every one in every christian church and denomination whatsoever, of whom it is evident, that the Holy Ghost hath called him by the gospel, and enlightened him by his gifts, sanctifying and preserving him in the true and living faith.

We abhor all envy and hatred springing from the difference of religious constitutions, as utterly repugnant to the mind of Christ; and we will unfeignedly love and own, as our brethren, all children of God, viz. such who love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity and truth, to whatever religious denomination they may belong.

We will not interfere in any altercations and disputes about religion, but adhere to the plain and incontrovertible

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tible fundamental truths of holy writ, making our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ and his all-sufficient merits the principal subject of our conversation with people of all denominations.

3. As the unity of faith does not necessarily imply an uniformity in the liturgy, ritual, rites and ceremonies; and, as the communion of faith ought not to be dissolved on account of any such disparity, therefore we will not, at any time, in our congregation, look upon ceremonies and rites, and the external mode of the liturgy, however harmless and good they may be in themselves, as being absolutely above amendment; nor will we ever confound things appertaining to the external mode of worship, with the essence and reality of our fellowship.

We can hold nothing among us as absolutely necessary, except such things as belong to the very essence, life and being of the church of Christ in general.

To that which is essential belongeth the unity of faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, thro' the Holy Ghost, the fellowship of love and of hope, and the union of the members of the congregation in one body, of which Christ is the head: The abiding in the doctrine of Jesus and his apostles, the maintaining the instructions of our Lord, and the following his example, are inseparably connected therewith. These, as belonging to the very essence of a congregation, can and must never be superseded in our congregation, nor any alteration be made therein at any time. We will rather implore the Lord incessantly, to cause us to abound herein, and to make us more and more conformable to his will by his Holy Spirit.

On the other hand, whatever relates only to external good order in the mode of worship, and the various regulations in the congregation, and is not to be deemed essentially necessary or unalterable, such regulations may be altered according to circumstances. Yet as long as they are means to promote a godly life and conversation, they are valuable, and ought to be conscientiously maintained. But when this end is no longer to be attained by them, they ought to be altered, lest they be kept up *merely* for custom's sake, in which case they might become rather an hindrance to the work of the Holy Ghost, which never must be restrained, and might prevent the worship of God in spirit and in truth.

We do therefore adopt with the antient brethren's church, that fundamental principle, that we will, from time to time, endeavour to amend whatever relates, either to the method of teaching, or to such regulations as are made for promoting the chief aim of a congregation of Christ, and seek to become more conformable to the holy scriptures therein.

In short, we will not retain any regulation, when we are convinced that it can be altered for the better, and to the blessing of the congregation. Neither will we lay aside any such, while evidently wholesome and useful for promoting a godly life and conversation.

4. We will pray the Lord of the harvest to send us always faithful labourers, and to prevent any ministers or teachers being appointed among us, who teach not sound doctrine; and we will be watchful, that no books be introduced among us, particularly such as are intended

tended for the instruction of our youth, which are not conformable to the doctrine of Christ and his apostles.

At the beginning of the brethren's labour in *England* and *Ireland*, and frequently since, it has been declared, as a fixed principle in our constitution, that we would live in amity with the established church, and not live in controversy with any religious denomination whatsoever, and notwithstanding our having received the episcopal ordination, discipline and ritual of the brethren's church, would pray for and actually labour, where opportunity is given unto us, to encrease the welfare of souls in the established church, and other religious denominations, and to keep such in them, as may prove a leaven and salt therein, though we cannot seek to restrain liberty of conscience.

Although it is our chief concern, to experience the blessings, and to receive more and more the signature of a congregation and people of Christ, yet we will never lose sight of that call of grace, which we have received in common with all the rest of the brethren's congregations, viz. to propagate the gospel all over the world, and particularly among the heathen, and to be subservient to the execution of our Lord's Testament, John xvii. We consider this call as inseparably connected with that election of grace which has brought us together. But in order that the spirit of readiness, to serve his will in all things, may increase daily among us, we will be watchful, that neither the genius of the times nor any circumstances nor personal influence whatsoever may cause us to deviate from an entire devotedness of heart to our Saviour and to his work.

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We will therefore bear constantly in mind, that our Saviour has made use of our brethren for the propagation of the gospel in the world, and that he has and still does, through grace, make use of many in the Brethren's Congregations now established in the world, to this great end, and that our Lord has collected many Brethren's congregations in various countries, who have received the like precious faith with us, and who enjoy the same grace, feeding on the merits of our Lord; all which are now, in the true unity of the faith, united in one œconomy of grace and love, which is called *Unitas Fratrum*, or United Brethren.

This union and communion, which our Lord and Saviour prayed for in his high-priestly prayer, John xvii. we esteem as an inestimable privilege, and will hold sacred, and, in conjunction with all our brethren, will do our utmost to promote the propagation of the gospel in the world.

II. *The Foundation and Rule of the Congregation Constitution.*

1. The unaffected imitation of Jesus and his apostles, in lowliness and poverty, is an essential characteristic of a congregation of Christ.

We will therefore pray for and seek, through his grace, invariably to preserve this as our proper character, not in word only, but in all our regulations, undertakings and transactions, yea, and in our whole manner of life; and carefully guard against any thing opposite thereunto, although the method of being led into another path should appear ever so specious. For the kingdom

dom of God is not of this world, and we are convinced, that his power in making us answer the purposes of his calling, both in and through us, can be more gloriously displayed in lowliness and poverty, than if we were ever so highly esteemed.

We will carefully watch, lest by degrees, well meant customs be introduced into the congregation, which are contrary to this essential characteristic ; and lest, under the specious pretence of rendering things more easy and convenient to the members of the congregation, any regulations be abolished and superseded which are agreeable to the said character, and calculated to render us more conformable thereto.

We will never forget, that we, like all our congregations, are a people, of whom it may be truly said, here have we no continuing city, but we seek one that is to come : thus minded alone it is we can be preserved from becoming like unto stagnant water, or from sinking into a slothful, lukewarm, Laodicean state.

2. The primary view of all congregation regulations must refer to the human heart ; and they are so calculated, that the labour on the souls, both on the side of those who are intrusted with the care of souls, and of those who are cared for, may be facilitated ; that all evil be prevented in the congregation from the beginning ; and that all things, which may give rise to the commission of sin, be as much as possible removed out of the way. Hence, at the same time, that external rules and regulations are established in the congregation, we must of necessity be principally concerned, that a vital knowledge of Jesus Christ, to the furtherance of a godly life and conversation, be implanted in the hearts of

the congregation members. This being the case, it will appear evident to all, how expedient and salutary it is, that good discipline and order be established, and what a great detriment it would be if it were otherwise.

But from hence it follows also, that whoever desires to be a member and inhabitant of the congregation, must, of his own free will, agree to all such regulations and orders as may be found necessary to be established; and that every regulation has the public consent; for as we can compel no one to follow our rules (and if we could we would not) so whoever has not a mind disposed to observe such rules, should not desire to stay among us.

Such rules and statutes must be conformable to the doctrine of our Saviour and his apostles, and tend to the real well-being of the members of the congregation, so that no true member that is ascertained of his calling, may find reason to hesitate to subscribe thereto. But after such rules are once agreed upon by the congregation, they are then sacredly to be kept by all the members and inhabitants of the congregation, as well as by the labourers and servants thereof, and that without any difference or respect of persons.

3. And whereas a congregation cannot subsist as an house of God, and proceed according to the rules and regulations which they themselves have agreed to, unless persons are appointed to have the inspection and direction of the whole, to maintain such regulations, and to be watchful that they are attended unto and followed; therefore, we have always had and will have such an institution among us, in whose hands the general direction and superintendency are placed.

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The congregation is properly ruled by those principles and statutes which they themselves have received and established, with this sole view, to maintain and promote unanimity and harmony. But the object of the attention of the labourers and servants, in their conferences, is properly to obviate, on the one hand, all mistakes and misapprehensions; and, on the other, to prevent all partiality and distinction of persons, that the said principles may rule without obstruction and controul.

4. All conferences and offices are intended for the great end of advancing the prosperity of the congregation; and therefore, all and each of them must be supported and respected, whether much or little is committed to them. At the same time, that established and approved rule should be strictly attended to, that one conference does not interfere with, and encroach upon, the other; and especially, that the elder's conference does not take into consideration, decide and determine in things which ought previously to be considered in other conferences; and that the offices in the congregation, go on each in due order, so that one may not interfere in the business of another.

5. We have committed to the elders conference, the general direction of the internal and external concerns of the congregation; and we consider it as a watch appointed to take care that all the other conferences may continue in the unobstructed discharge of their offices, and that the congregation regulations be every way duly observed.

We likewise expect of the elders conference, and look upon it as one of their principal incumbencies that

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they,

they, with all possible carefulness, trace out the thoughts of peace of our Lord, concerning each member of the congregation and its destination ; diligently taking heed lest the views of our Lord, concerning any one soul, be neglected through our fault ; so that each brother and sister in the congregation may be well assured, that their course and circumstances are, from time to time, and with concern, taken into consideration in the presence of the Lord.

6. In order to facilitate the attaining of this grand aim, there is, beside the above-mentioned direction, another conference appointed, consisting of the helpers of the several choirs of the congregation, which has the care of souls for its particular object, and is called the *choir-helpers conference*. But their deliberations and proposals are always to be referred to the elders conference for decision.

7. Furthermore, according to the apostle's rule. *Is there not a wise man among you, &c.* 1 Cor. vi. 5. the congregation has chosen men of understanding, who with a fatherly care, are to advise and assist the members of the congregation in their various concerns, to advance their prosperity, according to their best ability, to prevent and avert hurt and detriment from them, and, in a brotherly manner, to judge between brother and brother.

This is the proper view and idea of the *college of overseers* : they are to be overseers in the most literal sense of the word, and to be the eye, the ear and the hand, of the elders conference ; they are appointed for the maintainance of all the congregation orders, of good morals, uprightness and proper decorum, in the conduct of the members of the congregation, and have, in the
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most strict sense, an inspection over the matters committed to their charge.

Moreover, they are appointed to be a constant collateral council to the congregation servant or warden, in the discharge of his weighty office, namely, the care of the external affairs of the congregation; and therefore the congregation servant is to act in fellowship, and in concert with this company, in all parts of his office, touching the faithful administration of the income and disbursements of the congregation; and this company is likewise annually, or as often as the congregation-council shall desire it, to lay before them an account of the state of the affairs in their hands.

8. There is likewise appointed a *large helpers conference*, consisting of the members of the elders conference, the college of overseers and other members of the congregation chosen and confirmed thereto, who are well acquainted with the rules and course of the congregation, enjoy the confidence of the members thereof, and are endowed with grace and gifts to judge of cases and concerns as they occur, and to assist with good counsel. This conference has the daily course of all occurrences in the congregation for the object of their deliberation, and to prepare matters partly for the congregation-council, partly for the college of overseers, and partly for the elders conference.

9. Besides the conferences now mentioned, there are also particular conferences appointed, to superintend the trades, commerce and manufactures established, and the buildings erected, in the congregation, and any regulation which may be made relative to fire, &c.

10. *The congregation-council*, consisting of the members of the foregoing conferences and a certain number of communicants, chosen by the rest of the communicants, and confirmed in the elders conference. This conference is to consult about all such matters as concern and interest the whole congregation. In matters of this nature therefore nothing can be finally concluded upon, and established in the conference of the labourers and servants only, without the consent of the congregation council. To this class we reckon all such things as the introducing new congregations, or civil regulations and orders, or the making alterations in those introduced already, the bringing any considerable new expences upon the community, or the erecting new congregation buildings, &c. Each member of the congregation-council has not only a free vote, and a right to declare his opinion to the best of his knowledge, freely and without any scruple, according to the method adopted by the congregation-council itself, but is, as a member of the body, bound thereto, and that, so much the more, as it is expected of each inhabitant, according to the duty incumbent upon a brother that he has the well-being of the congregation at heart in his degree, and be subservient to the advancement thereof according to his ability.

Whosoever doth not speak his mind in the congregation-council, but makes exceptions against matters proposed therein afterwards, and, in other places, acts against honesty and conscience. Whoever has good advice to give, but withholdeth it out of self-interest,
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respect of persons, fear of man, or any other view, sinneth against the mind of Christ.

If any should scruple to utter his thoughts publickly in the congregation-council, he is at liberty to do it privately to the congregation helper, to the congregation servant, or any other labourer. And lest any member of the congregation-council should be deprived of an opportunity of communicating his observations: there shall be allowed in matters of weight, a time, not exceeding eight days after the meeting of the council, in which the matter is proposed; and at the next ensuing meeting of the congregation-council, any observation that has been made, shall be laid before it, but if any one chuses rather to utter his thoughts upon the subject by writing than by speaking, he may send in his written thoughts upon the subject, but he is to sign his name to his declaration, and, at this meeting, the affair may be concluded. But this rule of allowing eight days is only to be in matters of weight, and not in common and usual cases: but as, on the one hand, nothing is to be done in affairs, belonging to the congregation-council, contrary to the majority of votes, so, on the other hand, no one can refuse to submit to the voice of the majority; being bound to submit ourselves to one another in love.

Whoever is a member of the congregation-council, being intrusted by his fellow members with the care of the affairs of the congregation, in the articles specified above, cannot look upon himself as dispensed from taking share in whatever concerns the whole; whoever therefore, stays away from the congregation-council

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out of indifference or any other principle and without necessity, acts inconsistent with the character of a member of the council, yea, of the congregation itself.

As the elders conference and college of overseers will, in such cases as mentioned above, do nothing without the concurrence of the congregation-council; so the whole congregation, having impowered the council to act for them, every member engages to acquiesce and to assist in the execution of their resolutions; and in the the congregation council, resolutions are taken by the majority of votes.

II. The following offices are required in the congregation.

The congregation helper, whose office it is, in conjunction with the elders conference, to bear the concerns of the whole congregation upon his heart; to have a particular watchful eye over the continuance and furtherance of the internal course of grace; to maintain all congregation regulations with discretion and judgment, and to assist all the choirs in all internal, external, and personal concerns, with help and advice. He is the first person in the elders conference, and it is expected of him, that he should keep the whole together.

The minister of the congregation.

The Choir Helpers of both sexes; viz. of the married choir, of the choirs of the widowers and widows, of the single brethren and single sisters, as also of the boys and girls, and of the children.

The congregation servant, or warden, and the servant. of the respective choirs.

The chief persons of the schools, and respective childrens oeconomies.

The Organist.

The Almoner, or the conference which takes care of the poor.

The Physician of the congregation-place, with other persons appointed to nurse and minister to the sick.

The servant in the hall or chapel.

The Overseers of the roads and the Watchmen in the place, whose office is, to maintain good order and safety on the roads and all over the place, as also in the choir houses, both by day and night.

12. In supplying the office of Minister and of Choir Helper, as well as other congregation offices, choice ought always to be made of such persons, as are not only esteemed true congregation members; but who, according to the nature of their offices, are also endowed with the needful knowledge, and all other graces and gifts requisite thereunto, and upon whom the spirit of Jesus Christ and the congregation resteth. Now whereas these qualifications may be met with, not only in persons, who have applied themselves to study in academies and universities, in the usual course, but also in such who have not frequented universities; and whereas our dear Lord himself did call unlearned men for his foreordained witnesses and apostles, therefore, we deem it a laudable custom, and agreeable to the apostolic practice, that the offices in the congregation, and particularly, also the ministry of the gospel, be supplied by brethren indued with gifts and grace, whether they be scholars so called or not.

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13. Whereas it is of the utmost consequence, that the offices in the congregation be supplied with persons endowed with the requisite gifts of grace and of the spirit, being also approved in the hearts of the congregation members; and whereas it ought to lie with weight upon our hearts, that the execution of God's counsel of grace concerning the congregation, be at all times our principle point of view herein; and that all human by-views and mistakes, and, more particularly, all insincerity and unjustifiable self-will, be prevented in matters of such great moment; therefore we do hereby, once for all, empower and authorize the elders conference to take care that all the congregation offices be, from time to time, well and duly supplied, conformably to the constitution of the Brethren's Congregation; and as we would not be left to our own choice, touching the persons proposed for such offices, but depend solely upon the directions of our Lord, therefore, in all such cases, it shall be decided by lot; whom the Lord has chosen, for the supplying of any of these offices.

14. The college of Overseers and the large Helpers Conference are to be formed in the following manner.

1. Of such who are members of it by virtue of their office, then each member of the congregation-council shall vote for such a number of Brethren, as are to be appointed members thereof. The votes being collected, the elders conference is to take all those who have been voted for, into the lot, according to the majority of votes, unless there should be some material objection to any of them. And thus those who are appointed by lot, shall be declared duly elected, and take their places
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accordingly. The president of the overseer's college is to be proposed by the elder's conference to the congregation-council, and if the latter has no material objection to the person thus proposed, then the confirmation of the brother proposed is likewise to be referred to the decision of the lot.

There belong to the College of Overseers, by virtue of their offices, the persons who supply the offices of congregation servants, the servants of the choirs of the widowers and single brethren, and the curators of the widows and single sister's choirs.

To the Larger Helper's conference belong, by virtue of their office, all the members of the elder's conference and of the college of overseers.

14. We look upon the division of the several choirs which human nature and circumstances naturally form, as belonging essentially to congregation order.

The great aim of every choir-division is, that each according to the modification arising from age, sex or circumstances, may experience for spirit, soul, and body the power of being cloathed on with Christ, which grace is superior to all other knowledge, and effects more than all the methods prescribed by human wisdom, and that every soul may obtain an evangelical knowledge of Christ and of itself, and may increase in the enjoyment of all the merits of the life, sufferings and death of Jesus. This has given rise to the institution among us, that each of the single choirs dwell together, separate from the other choirs. This institution doth in no wise spring from any civil or temporal views, but is intended solely and alone for the furtherance of

the internal course of grace in every individual, that the souls may be more effectually cared for, and that the necessary outward good order may be maintained. Therefore the inhabitants of the choir houses are to look upon themselves as standing in the same civil and external relations, and are to conduct themselves as being upon the same footing with the rest of the inhabitants of the place. Our choir houses are properly intended for schools of the holy ghost.

And altho' for the sake of training up young people in order to render them useful, and also for the support of the sundry services, to which the choir-houses and particularly the single brethren's choir are subservient for the furtherance of our Saviour's cause; it is unavoidable that trades and handicraft-busineses must be carried on in the choir houses, yet the elder's conference is to be watchful, that all such busineses be more and more regulated agreeable to the above principles; and all appearance of their being houses erected for the sake of gain, or to establish a community of goods, be avoided.

The elder's conference ought to make it a principal concern, that the brethren and sisters, in the different choir divisions, may be so established in grace, and in the knowledge and love of our Saviour, that there may be always many in the single choirs, who are prepared for every purpose our Saviour may call them to.

It is always to be attended to, that the different choir divisions in the congregation are kept in as due a proportion to each other, as the state of things will permit.

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III. *Concerning the Relation in which the Congregation stands to the Magistrates.*

1. Whereas the holy Scriptures expressly command us, to be subject unto the higher powers, and to all who have authority over us, because being ordained by God, they are the ministers of God to us for good; therefore we will approve ourselves, in all things, as loyal subjects, sacredly and religiously submitting ourselves to the laws and constitution of the realm; and whoever shall act knowingly contrary thereto, shall forfeit his or her place among us.

We look upon ourselves as bound in duty not only to love and honour our gracious sovereign, and all put in authority under him, but also to do all, that is in our power, to contribute to the prosperity of the land in general; and not to allow our own private interest to sway us from our duty, as subjects, or seduce us to seek our own advantage, to the detriment of government. And we will submit to the laws of our country, and to the ordinances of men for Christ's sake.

2. But if an instance should occur among us, which may God in mercy prevent; that any one shall be found guilty of a criminal action, which lays him open to the laws; such a person is thereby excluded from our congregation, and will be worthy of double chastisement, as knowing his master's will and not doing it.

IV. *Concerning the Relation between the Congregation and its Servants.*

1. The congregation and its labourers and servants, constitute *one* body, and are absolutely inseparable one from the other. They have but *one* and the same interest, that all things be conducted honestly, decently, and in love, to the promoting of the congregation's prosperity, for the edifying of the body of Christ. Whatever may appear as a different interest, or have any tendency to hurt the mutual confidence between the congregation and its labourers and servants, ought to be abhorred and carefully avoided, and must be banished from among us.

2. No one can be a labourer or a servant of the congregation, if he is not approved to the hearts of the congregation; and the very name *labourer* and *servant* conveys an idea of their obligation to the congregation; and on account of such obligation, it ought at all times to be their unfeigned concern, not only to stand in an uninterrupted fellowship with our Saviour, touching their own hearts, but also to crave from him the gifts of grace, requisite for their calling, that they may not act merely by their own reason and strength, or according to the dictates of mere human wisdom; but, being led by the Holy Ghost, may act, in their offices, agreeable to the mind of Christ.

They ought not to seek their own, but what is the Lord's. They are not to assume dominion, or to lord it over the rest of the congregation members; but are

to be helpers of their joy, to be instant in season and out of season; to reprove, rebuke, exhort and comfort their fellow members, as occasion may require, with all long suffering and doctrine, 2 Tim. iv. 2. And the congregation also, with all her members, is bound to weigh and to fulfill the following intreaty and admonition of the apostle:

“ We beseech you, brethren, to know them which labour among you, and are over you, in the Lord, and admonish you, and esteem them very highly in love for their work’s sake, and be in peace among yourselves.”
1 Thess. v. 12. 13.

Agreeable, therefore, to the exhortation of the same apostle, we will obey our teachers and labourers, who have the rule over us, and submit ourselves; for they watch for our souls as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy and not with grief, for that would be unprofitable to us (Heb. xiii. 17.) We will pray for them with all earnestness.

3. We will never appoint a person, to an office in the congregation merely in consideration of his natural talents and gifts; for this would be a deviation from the practice of the apostles; but we will principally attend to the internal call of grace and gifts of the spirit.

4. No labourer and servant of the congregation, shall encroach upon the office of the other, nor obstruct the discharge thereof; but each ought to love and honour the other, and render the execution of his office as easy as he possibly can.

5. Since each brother, in the congregation, according to his degree and measure, justly bears a joint concern

concern for the prosperity of the congregation, and the work of the Lord in general, and is both entitled and bound in conscience to utter his thoughts on this head ; because each member of the body has a fellow-feeling of the weal and woe of the whole ; therefore each labourer and servant ought willingly to lend an ear, and pay due regard to all modest and brotherly observations or admonitions of the congregation members.

6. Congregation labourers and servants, capable of carrying on trades and handicraft-busineses, ought, according to the apostolic and antient custom in the Brethren's Congregations, not to be ashamed thereof, nor lay them aside ; but they should make as much use of them as possible, for the earning of their own maintenance, except their service in the congregation should take up all their time.

On the other hand, we look upon ourselves as bound in duty, faithfully to provide for the maintenance of those of our labourers and servants and their families, who cannot maintain themselves either wholly or in part, lest any of them should want necessaries.

7. As no brother can discharge any office committed to him in the congregation, to the benefit of the whole, any longer than the Lord granteth unto him the grace requisite thereto, and the confidence of the congregation ; therefore all labourers and servants, in case they should lose their grace and gift, and the confidence and blessing of the congregation should be withdrawn from them in their offices, should gladly resign their offices, and return to the state of other private congregation members.

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V. Relation of the Members of the Congregation, to the Congregation itself.

1. When any person desires leave to live in this congregation, the college of overseers, are to make strict enquiry into all the circumstances of such a person, and particularly into the motives and views of such a request. And the overseers are to make a report of their enquiry, together with their opinion upon it, to the elder's conference, that thus it may be rendered as evident as possible; that such request is not made out of any by-views, or by persuasion of others; but out of true and sincere motives, and upon due deliberation, and, that the person requesting such permission is under no moral or civil obligations which can prevent it, or which might occasion reproach or any disturbance to the congregation after their removal.

2. No one shall at any time obtain leave to come and dwell here, but from the elder's conference: and such leave is to be made known to the persons requesting it, by the college of overseers.

3. We will admit none to the congregation on account of their rank, wealth, or capacity. We also establish anew, that old fundamental principle among us, viz. that no one, shall be received among us, merely out of good hopes, unless we discover convincing evidences of the labour of the Holy Ghost in his heart, and of his call of grace. For since the view with our congregation, neither is, nor, by the grace of God, ever shall be any other; but to dwell

dwell together in true union of faith, in brotherly love, and agreeable to the mind of Christ; it followeth therefore, that none can be looked upon as a member of the congregation, and dwell and abide therein, except he hath either actually received this mind, by being born again of God, or at least has an unfeigned desire for it.

If, nevertheless, such persons should be found in the congregation, of whatever rank or age they may be, who have no understanding of the mystery of Christ, and who are, at present, incapable of enjoying the unity of faith; nay, who perhaps have spent a long time already, in a luke-warm indifferency towards our Saviour, and who therefore give us just reason to doubt of their call unto the congregation, and of their prospering therein; in such cases the elder's conference is to take it into mature consideration, whether such persons are to be borne with in patience any longer; or whether it would be more expedient, even for themselves, to advise them, in tender love and heartiness, to leave the place?

Should any be found to make the evangelical, free, and generous manner of treatment in the congregation, a cloak of licentiousness and maliciousness, and will not submit and keep himself within the boundaries of the congregation rules; or who gives offence, and is hurtful to other souls, he belongeth not to us, and shall, without respect of persons, be removed from the congregation.

4. We look upon it, as one of the most important and salutary regulations, in the congregation, that for
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the prevention of hurt to souls, and of all loss of our glory in Christ, the separation of both sexes be maintained invariably, in due order and decency.

We, therefore, as many as are house-fathers, will make it our concern to regulate our families and domestic affairs, as much as can possibly be agreeable to this salutary purpose.

From a consciousness of our human depravity and sinfulness, and not because we look upon it as an high degree of holiness; we will religiously see to it, that all unnecessary private intercourse of individual persons of both sexes, from which danger and harm might accrue, be prudently avoided and not connived at, under any pretence whatsoever; that thus, not only all occasions to irregularities and transgressions may be cut off; but principally also that all clandestine connexions and engagements, as well as all promises of marriage, made contrary to due order, be prevented.

If, nevertheless, and notwithstanding all possible care, it should happen, that single persons of both sexes enter into any clandestine understanding or engagement one with another, and promise marriage to each other; and any other persons should countenance or occasion such irregularities: then not only the single persons who have been guilty of such irregularities; but also those, who have countenanced or occasioned the same, shall be dismissed from the congregation.

5. We have thought it highly necessary to come to a firm agreement with each other concerning that momentous point, the education of our children, in the

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nurture and admonition of the Lord, and we covenant together before the Lord; that, through the grace of God, we will sacredly and inviolably observe the following fundamental principles and rules.

a. The congregation members in the married choir, whom God has blessed with children, ought never to let it escape their minds, that their children are the property of Jesus; purchased and redeemed with his holy, precious blood; on which account it is incumbent on them, to bring them up for our Lord alone, and to take all possible care to avert from them offence and hurt. To this, it is above all other considerations requisite, that the parents approve themselves as children of God, and as priests of the Lord, in their whole deportment; edifying their children by their example, and exciting them to follow them, as they follow Christ. For this is the most effectual method to prove a blessing to the children, and the parents themselves will infallibly reap a blessing from the faithful discharge of their parental duty.

b. Next to this first and greatest incumbence of the parents in the education of their children; great attention is to be paid to the manner of their being trained up, and the way of living to which they are accustomed in their younger years. Our call to serve our Lord and Saviour in various ways, in the propagation of the gospel, and the public good, make us resolve to beware of educating our children in too delicate a manner, and of rendering them too tender in their constitutions: we will rather from their very birth inure them
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to the hardships and troubles of human life, and particularly put them, in due time, to all manner of work and useful employments.

c. Touching the regulation of schools in the congregation. The elder's conference, and the directors of the schools, are to make it an object of their peculiar care, that the youth be fully instructed in the knowledge of the truth unto godliness, agreeable to the holy scriptures, and in a manner best adapted to the heart and capacity of the children; that thus the knowledge of Jesus Christ may be implanted in their tender hearts, and they may take in the doctrine of salvation, not only with the understanding and memory, but principally that they may receive it as a blessing for their hearts. Beside this most material part of their instruction in the fundamental articles of the christian religion, care is to be taken in the said schools, that the children, in general, receive the necessary instruction in reading, writing, and cyphering, or whatever else may be useful, according to circumstances. And we look upon it as a duty incumbent upon the whole congregation, to care for it, that our children be instructed in whatever may be esteemed necessary for their future utility; and should any parent be remiss, or indolent, in using all his endeavours to defray the expence of his child's or children's education, he shall be looked upon as an unfaithful parent, and undeserving the congregations assistance. Those who have the inspection over the schools, are likewise to use their best endeavours in examining into, and finding out, the children's inclinations, capacity and talents, with a view to their future destination.

d. In order to render the education of the children in the congregation as easy to the parents as possible, the elder's conference and servants of the congregation, are to assist them herein with the necessary instructions, advice and help, as also to point out to them the best methods that may be taken for the benefit of the children's souls, for the forming their minds and conduct for the use of society, and for teaching them to act with decency, civility, and respect, towards all men. And the parents ought gratefully to acknowledge, and to make good use of such advice, guidance, and assistance, in an affair of so great consequence.

e. If, contrary to what we hope, it should happen, that children of one family cannot, without danger and hurt of souls, be suffered to live together; or if it is judged necessary to advise, that one or the other child be placed elsewhere; the parents, out of love and faithfulness towards their children, ought gladly to comply therewith.

f. As the separation of the sexes is an universally established rule, so the attention of the parents is also particularly to be directed thereto, in the education of their children. To this end the parents are to be careful, that their small children be always under constant, prudent inspection, and never left quite alone; and particularly that at their dressing and undressing, in their sleeping, and on other occasions, all opportunity for hurtful curiosity and seduction, be avoided.

But if, contrary to our hopes, there should nevertheless, such parents be found in the congregation, who, notwithstanding all faithful advice and assistance, are willfully unfaithful, negligent, and careless, in the educa-

education of their children, they are not only responsible for it to the Lord, whose property they and their children are ; but they must blame themselves, if, on account of their blameable and hurtful education of their children, and because they have slighted the admonitions given to them, they forfeit their privilege of dwelling in the congregation on that account.

But before any thing is declared to be a real seduction, the elder's conference ought first most carefully to examine into the matter, both touching the conduct of the children, and the share which the parents have in the guilt, consulting also with the college of overseers, and not resolving to dismiss them from the congregation, until all persons in any wise concerned therein, are first thoroughly heard.

6. As members of one body, of which Christ is the head, and by virtue of our being in the unity of faith of love and hope, which we are called unto, we think it our universal duty to be helpers of each others joy ; and to help in bearing the weal and woe of each other. It is, therefore, so much the more incumbent on each congregation member, neither to undertake, nor to occasion any thing, which might be productive of hurt, detriment or reproach unto others, or unto the whole congregation ; and we will have the same attention to the well-being of our fellow creatures.

7. If any brother or sister in the congregation should discover any thing which may occasion hurt and detriment to souls, or from whence the loss of our glory in Christ may be apprehended ; they are bound in duty neither to conceal it, nor to make it known imprudently,

dently, and in an improper place ; but they are bound to make it known, without delay, to the overseers, or to the elder's conference, either directly, or by means of their respective choir-labourers, that thus the matter may be enquired into, and all detriment prevented as much as possible.

8. Whereas, according to the congregation rules, nobody can live in the congregation, much less purchase, possess, or hold by lease, any house or land in the congregation. except he be a member of the congregation, or hath obtained permission thereto, as in § 1. of this section ; it followeth, of course, that no inhabitant is permitted to let his house or land in the congregation place, to any person whatsoever, unless to such who have received such permission from those, who as above, have the direction of the congregation. And as we would prevent the unpleasing and unhappy consequences of having seductive or wicked persons among us, who, by their evil example, might mislead and corrupt our youth ; great care shall be taken by the proprietor, or proprietors of this village, who have entered into this Brotherly Agreement with us ; that in case it should be at any time found proper to dispose of any parcel of land in this village, for building, or any other purpose ; or to let any lands or houses on a lease for years, for building or any other use ; that it be never done till after such due examination of the state and circumstances of the person to whom such sale or lease is proposed to be made ; and obtaining the approbation, as in said § first of this section is mentioned, and until legal agreements are executed, by which such person, their heirs, executors, administrators

tors or assigns, shall be bound at any time to cede such tenure to the proprietors, vnder or leasor, for the time being ; or to such person as the elder's conference and overseers shall nominate unto him, upon such equitable considerations, as shall be agreed upon before hand by the proprietors, vnder, or lessor, and such purchaser or leaseholder, whenever the proprietors, vnder or lessor, or the said persons, who have the direction of the congregation, shall require it in writing. And we, the present proprietors and members of the congregation, solemnly agree and bind ourselves hereunto, in the presence of our Lord ; knowing that it is absolutely necessary, if the aim of the congregation and its laudable institution shall be obtained. But, in such case, if the proprietor or proprietors do not chuse to purchase, or cannot find a purchaser ; then the present possessor, or leaseholder, shall bind himself to leave the administration of such house to such person or persons as the overseers shall find proper ; and, in case any persons shall chuse to remove from such his house or tenure, then he is to be under the same obligation and rule, touching his house or tenure in the congregation, as though he had been desired to leave the place. As thus we are careful to prevent persons becoming inhabitants among us, who could prove hurtful to the principles and practice of others ; for the same reason we renew the old rule, that no inhabitant of this place shall lodge in his or their houses or dwellings, any person of any rank, condition, or character whatever, for a longer or shorter time, without the concurrence of the congregation or choir servant.

9. As the congregation think it incumbent upon them, from a principle of brotherly love, to assist all their fellow members, who, on account of old age or sickness, or by other unavoidable causes, are rendered incapable of supporting themselves ; so we will more particularly consider it as our duty to care for the good education of the fatherless or motherless orphan-children in the congregation, assisting them in learning, suitable sciences, arts, or trades ; thereby enabling them in time, to prove useful members of society, and honestly to maintain themselves.

10. We have no community of goods among us, and find it necessary to avoid even all appearance thereof, as it is in no wise, any part of our aim in coming to live together, that we might enrich ourselves or render the community rich.

11. Each inhabitant shall, according to the apostolic rule, work and eat his own bread ; and no person who is wilfully idle, shall be suffered to live among us. He that has a family must endeavour, through industry, to maintain himself and family in an honest manner ; and no person shall borrow money which he is not able to pay, with a view to support himself and his family ; this being the direct way to the ruin of themselves and the hurt of others in temporals, and to dishonour the gospel.

12. Whoever carelessly shall incur debts which he is not able to pay, must not expect that the congregation will be answerable for them ; this being by no means their duty : nay, according to circumstances, such a one may forfeit his right to dwell in the congregation place.

place. If, more especially, any one should presume to abuse the credit and name of the congregation for the purposes of borrowing money from persons or friends out of our circle, he is to be deemed guilty of a glaring unfaithfulness, and falls under reproof; and, according to circumstances, loses his right of dwelling in the place.

13. We look upon it as equitable, and calculated to advance the temporal prosperity of the congregation, that all the inhabitants thereof, that have an inclination and abilities to carry on trades or commerce, be assisted in word and deed; and that industry be encouraged and promoted in all possible ways. But we consider it as an established rule, that no one shall be allowed to set up, and to carry on any such trade or business in the congregation, without first consulting the college of overseers; informing them of the view, method, and extent of such trade and business, as also of the means by which they intend to set it up. And if then the said college approveth of his plan; he is also to obtain the permission of those who have the direction of the congregation; and, where the law requires it, a licence from the magistrates.

14. But no one shall be allowed to extend his business beyond the limits thus allowed, or to combine with it other branches of business, without obtaining the special concurrence of the said overseers, &c. At the same time that the said college watches over the continual punctual observance of this rule, they are to take care, that on one hand no monopolies are occasioned or permitted, whereby one excludeth and hindereth the other from carrying on a trade or business, that he himself

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may have the greater gain thereby ; and that, on the other hand, each inhabitant be prevented from working to the detriment of another, or from ruining his trade entirely.

15. All the inhabitants of the place are, and own themselves bound to accede to all the regulations made, and measures taken, for the good of the congregation and place ; to take share therein, and to contribute to raise the expences requisite thereto, in due and reasonable proportion.

To these belong, among other articles, the above-mentioned maintenance of our labourers and servants ; viz. as many of them as are not able to maintain themselves, either wholly or in part, as likewise the expences incurred by the maintenance of our congregation regulations and good civil order ; as, for instance, the keeping the roads in due repairs, as also making the regulations necessary against the danger of fire and the like ; and we will never be wanting, from time to time, to raise among us, what may be requisite for such exigencies ; and we will take effectual share in every thing that can promote the common good, and assist in the general necessities of our brethren, agreeable to the rule of free willingness which has been established among us.

16. Each inhabitant of the place, looks upon himself as bound to enter into such measures as may be found necessary to preserve the public peace, good order, and decorum, both in the streets and in the houses, by day and night, and to this end will contribute either by assisting in person, or by contributing in money, to
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the keeping such a watch as may be thought needful from time to time.

17. If new buildings are to be erected, or any capital repairs to be made, whether for the use of the whole congregation, or for private inhabitants, previous notice is to be given to the college of overseers, who are then to take care that every thing is conducted in a proper manner, and to the prevention of fire.

VI. *Concerning the conduct of the congregation members individually, and towards each other.*

1. We will make it our unfeigned concern, to treat each other with love, meekness, and humility; each esteeming the other better than himself, willingly serving and assisting each other. We will endeavour to shew the same mind towards our neighbours, strangers and travellers, nay, towards all men, so that those inexhaustible and instructive words of our Lord: "Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them," may be practically and effectually verified in us. But if any one, contrary thereunto, should presume to encroach upon, or to prejudice the property of another, or to molest another from a principle of selfishness; and if such person, notwithstanding all admonitions, should obstinately persist therein, he shall not be deemed a brother by us, nor suffered to continue in the congregation.

We will, in all cases and transactions, both among ourselves and among others, act with uprightness and sincerity;

sincerity ; using no arts, and, still less, conforming to the manner of those, who endeavour to compass their ends by subtilty, and at the expence of their neighbour; therefore, artfulness and dissimulation shall be deemed among us equally criminal with other gross sins and works of the flesh.

2. Since the unity of faith doth in no wise destroy good order and subordination, but ought, according to the holy scriptures, rather to strengthen it ; therefore all brethren and sisters in the congregation, which are engaged in the service of individuals or families, are never to be wanting in shewing to their superiors due faithfulness, obedience, and respect, as becometh servants; but, on the contrary, their conduct herein ought to be so much the more irreprovable, because those, whom they serve, are members of the body of Christ, and brethren and sisters. But, on the other hand, it is justly expected of those brethren and sisters, who have brethren and sisters in their service, that they treat them with love and tenderness, and gratefully acknowledge their faithful service.

3. If differences should arise between masters and servants, they should be soon adjusted among themselves in a brotherly manner, lest any ill-will take place in their minds : but if this cannot be effected, or if any actual unfaithfulness should be laid to the charge of the servants, then the matter is to be referred to the college of overseers, who are to examine into, and decide in it, according to the true state of the case, agreeable to the tenor of this our Brotherly Agreement.

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4. If any one should not be able to find in the congregation, persons requisite for his service, and therefore thinks himself under a necessity to make use of persons not belonging to the congregation, the elder's conference of the congregation is first to be informed thereof, and without their knowledge and permission he shall not be allowed to take such steps. And if, on account of circumstances, a house father should be permitted to take such persons into his service for a season, he is bound to be answerable for them; and if they should create irregularities and give rise to just complaints, he must dismiss them without delay.

5. As the setting aside, or even confounding of different ranks and stations is contrary to the order established of God in human society: therefore, notwithstanding our unity in the faith, and the equality of our call of grace, the order of God, and the distinction of rank and station, shall not be set aside in the congregation, consequently it is by no means a part of the congregation constitution, that there should be an uniformity or equality in the external course of individuals. But we will endeavour according to the example of sound doctrine to let temperance, decency, modesty, and frugality appear in all things, in our dress, in eating and drinking, in our dwellings, furniture, &c. and by the grace of God, let luxury, vanity, and abuse of temporal goods, be removed far from us.

6. We will, in general, beware of reading such books and pamphlets as may corrupt our minds from the simplicity that is in Christ Jesus, or the contents of which are unbecoming a christian; but more particularly we

will not suffer among us any books which deceitfully lead to satyrical reflexions upon the holy scriptures, or upon religion in general ; nor shall any lascivious, licentious and hurtful writings, pictures, or representations be suffered among us. And whosoever introduceth such among us, and wilfully, and to the detriment of others, encourageth the reading and use of them, him we will disown and dismiss, as a seducer, to whom that petition in our litany is applicable :

“ Put far from thy people all seducers.”

7. Through the grace of God, we will sacredly preserve that character inseparable from true christianity, viz. to be true, and to keep our word and good faith to every one ; and if a brother should borrow of another, or of any other friend, or of any person whatsoever out of our circle, money or the worth of money, or shall enter into any other engagement with any one, and he shall either wilfully, or even out of carelessness, neglect the promised restitution or the fulfilment of his engagement, it shall be considered as a heinous crime, and be treated according as the circumstances, upon enquiry, shall appear, without respect of person.

We think it necessary to renew the old rule ; that every member of the congregation, whether in or out of business, shall, at any time, when he apprehends that he is running behind hand in his outward affairs, mention it to the congregation or choir servant, or to the president of the college of overseers, that he may be advised, and that every step may be taken to prevent his falling into heavy circumstances, and doing injustice thereby ;

thereby ; and should the college of overseers hear or have reason to fear, that any inhabitant of the place is in danger of becoming insolvent, they shall call upon him to open the state of his affairs ; and he shall with them nominate two brethren thereunto ; and to such he is bound by this Brotherly Agreement to open his affairs, to their satisfaction ; and upon his refusal, he loses his right to continue an inhabitant of this place. The persons to whom he thus intrusts the knowledge of his affairs, except in case of danger, are to be under the obligation of keeping it a secret, as the whole is intended merely to prevent hurt to individuals, and dishonour to the gospel.

8. To carry abroad or divulge personal affairs, or news, by word of mouth, or by writing, whereby the good name and character of others are frequently injured, and other mischief done, we will not suffer among us ; as we will likewise carefully beware of unreasonable or unbecoming relations or narrations, and of passing our judgment upon public and political transactions.

9. We also renew the old rule established among us, that whoever intends to take a journey, to be from home a night or nights, or on a sabbath day, shall first make it known to their respective choir labourer ; or if a servant or journeyman, to his master or mistress also.

10. Should any misunderstanding or bickering arise among any of the inhabitants, or any one should think he has suffered an injury from another, they shall first, according to the rule of our Lord, speak with each other in love, and seek to settle among themselves their difference ;

rence ; but if this should not have the desired effect, then the brother who supposes himself injured shall take with him some other brethren whom he shall chuse, and try to convince his brother ; but if even thus the affair cannot be decided, then it is to be laid before the said college of overseers, who are appointed by us as arbitrators, that they may examine into, and decide, the affair in a just and brotherly manner ; and we bind ourselves jointly and severally to abide by their determination.

11. If any one among us should by the permission of God be deprived of the use of his reason, mercy shall, as far as circumstances will permit, be shewn to him, and he shall be committed to the care and inspection of understanding persons ; and if he should recover, what is past shall never be remembered to his prejudice.

12. If our place or our neighbourhood should be in danger of fire (which may God prevent) we will not only in this place lend each other faithful assistance, but be at all times heartily willing to lend the same also to our neighbours, paying due regard to any regulation which may be made on this account.

13 For the ease of persons in trade and commerce and for the ease of those who have families, the single choirs are willing to assist the married inhabitants of the congregation, letting them have the fittest persons they can give, both for the carrying on of trades and other necessary services and employments.

14. The promoting of all trades and commerce in the congregation, is a particular incumbency of the college of overseers ; on which account they are as often

as it is thought necessary, to consult about whatever relates to trade with the established trades-conference, consisting of all the masters of trades, taking into consideration with them, whatever may be beneficial and advantageous to them ; and seeing to it, that all things be herein conducted honestly and regularly, not only before the Lord but also before men. Now although we cannot, in this extensive affair, bring all possible cases and circumstances before-hand under certain and fixed rules, and it must be left to the judgment and faithful care of those brethren to whose trust the congregation has committed these affairs, to find out and to regulate herein what shall appear from time to time, and, according to circumstances, most expedient ; yet we think it advisable to insert into this our present agreement, the following positions, which we will establish as principles in trade and business, and faithfully attend thereunto in our congregation.

VII. *Rules and Orders of Trade.*

I. As we ought always to acknowledge it with thanks unto God, when he supplieth us with work, and blesteth the work of our hands, so we will beg it of him as a grace, that although we endeavour to maintain ourselves and families by our trades and businesses in a decent manner, the ungodly desire of gain and of becoming rich, may never take place, but that each tradesman's principal view may be, faithfully to serve his neighbour.

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2. The blessing of God, and even the temporal profit in trades and commerce, and the establishing and preserving good credit, and the custom of persons in business dependeth upon strictly seeing to it, that on the one hand the goods be good, both as to materials and workmanship, and that on the other hand the prices be reasonable and not raised above the true value of them.

3. In general, we look upon it as necessary to observe an old rule made among us, concerning those engaged in trade, viz. that all goods be sold for ready money. This rule was originally made with a view to prevent the losses, and often outward ruin of the seller, and the excuse, on his part, of laying too great a price on his goods, by way of indemnifying himself on account of the long credit he must give; and as it is a rule that the price be fixed, those who buy for ready money, either pay too much, or those who buy on credit, pay too little; and by giving credit, some heedless and inconsiderate minds may be led to run into debt, to their own and other persons detriment. In connexion with this rule, we also renew the old rule, that no one shall trust any brother or sister who have nothing to support themselves but the work of their hands, above seven shillings to a single person, and ten shillings and sixpence to a married one, without mentioning it to the servant of the congregation, or their choir, and its being approved of. And no such brother or sister is to take up goods amounting to more than the sums specified above, without making their case known to the servant of the congregation, or their choir. Though the merchants, clothiers, stuff makers, and those who sell by wholesale

cannot always sell their goods for ready money, yet they are to have this rule always in their view, lest by trusting too much they expose themselves and others to loss.

4. If any should either depart from these rules, or give just occasion of complaint, of having abused them by overcharging of the buyer, or of any other want of faithfulness and integrity in his work, the college of overseers is in all such cases to make full enquiry into the matter, to rectify the misconduct, and according to circumstances to prohibit an irregular master, who refuseth to submit to good order and to mend his faults, from carrying on his trade here.

5. Each faithful and industrious tradesman in the congregation, particularly also new beginners shall be assisted by the college of overseers with good advice and actual help; and if such a one should be unable to provide himself with the necessary materials, and for the better carrying on his trade, to purchase them at the first hand, he shall, upon his request, if possible, be assisted with the requisite loan at lawful interest.

6. It is expected of tradesmen among us, that they do not only consider their own private advantage, but also the advancement of trades and businesses in general, and that according to the doctrine of Christ, each do to others as he wisheth to be done by. In consequence thereof, an able and experienced master ought to think it a pleasure to put a beginner, who has a confidence in him and requests it of him, into the right way to get customers, and to shew him the advantages in his trade, in purchasing and in preparing the materials, and carrying on the business. This way of acting will be attend-

ed with blessing, and the well-being of the whole will also promote that of private persons.

7. It has already been settled above in the fifth section, No. 15, that no one is allowed to set up, nor to carry on any trade and business, except with the approbation of the direction of the congregation. If, therefore, an inhabitant intends to carry on his trade as a master, and maketh this his intention known to the college of overseers, they in conjunction with the trades-conference are not only to enquire, whether such a one has worked already as master elsewhere, but also to be ascertained of his ability by examining his work ; and if his ability cannot be scrupled nor any other material objections be found, the elder's conference is to be applied unto for obtaining the desired permission.

8. A master thus approved and authorized to set up his trade, ought then by no means to contrive his work so as to undersell the rest and get custom thereby ; but like other masters, to sell substantial goods, and thus to keep up and encrease the credit of the trades established here.

9. As it has been mentioned already, that none shall attempt to seek an exclusive right, to carry on a trade here, so it is not left to the option of a master to employ as many journeymen and apprentices as he pleaseth : but we have once for all agreed, that the college of overseers together with the trades-conference, shall according to the state of the trade and businesses of the place in general, and other circumstances, determine both the number of masters of each trade, as also that of the journeymen and apprentices, and add to, or diminish, the number in an equitable manner and without partiality.

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10. Our masters ought to consider their journeymen as helpers in their calling, to treat them in all things in a brotherly manner, willingly and punctually to pay them either weekly, monthly, or by the piece, the stipulated wages, or as the same shall be fixed by the overseer's college and the trades-conference, and in case they find reason to complain of the work, they are to speak with them about it in a friendly and convincing manner; so that it may find entrance, and the complaints be redressed.

11. Towards apprentices, a master ought to act the part of a father, to bear with them as much as possible; and in case an apprentice behaves in a manner, that is unbecoming or hurtful, his master is not to act towards him precipitately, or in the heat of passion, but to weigh how he may be brought into a proper and happy course. A master ought to employ his apprentices carefully and diligently in working at that trade which they are to learn; and faithfully to teach them all the advantages peculiar to that trade; that thus, to the masters own satisfaction, good and useful tradesmen may be trained up. And lest apprentices, to their great detriment, should, during the years of their apprenticeship, lose again what they may have learned at school, the masters will, out of love and faithfulness, allow them weekly some hours at the most convenient time, in order to employ them in the practice of writing and cyphering, that they may thereby also qualify themselves to carry on their trades to more advantage, after the years of their apprenticeship are over,

12. Lastly,

12. Lastly, all our masters ought to see to it, that the work bespoke of them be always delivered at the time, when they have promised it. On which account they will do well not to promise the work to be done but by such times as they are sure they can get it ready, saving unforeseen hinderances, and the journeymen will do their utmost to put it in the power of the master to keep his word.

13. He likewise that will work in this place as a journeyman, cannot according to his own option engage with any master, but must be herein directed by the college of overseers. If such a one cometh hither from another congregation, the said college is first to examine his testimonials, and if he has obtained leave to stay and work here, he is strictly to conform to those congregation rules and manners established here, and they are to be communicated to him, nor is he to presume in opposition thereto, to appeal to the way of thinking and acting usual among journeymen elsewhere.

14. What has been observed above, Sect. VI. No. 2. according to the apostle's rule, 1 Tim. vi. 2. viz: that brethren and sisters that are in family-service, ought for this very reason, because they stand with their masters in the unity of faith, to be so much the more conscientious and irreprovable in the discharge of their duty towards them; this is also applicable to our journeymen; each of them ought to shew to his master, as to his superior, respect and obedience, faithfully, and as much as possible to promote his interest, and to be willing to receive good advice and instruction that thus he may daily improve in his trade, and consequently render himself more and more capable by good workmanship to advance

vance the prosperity of trades and businesses in this place in his degree also.

15. Should a journeyman, contrary to our hope, discover, in his master a way of conducting his business, something that appears to him offensive and wrong, whether it may concern the materials of his work or something else; in such a case he is not to mention it to his master in a rude manner, and still less to speak evil of him to others, and to ruin his credit thereby; but on the contrary, he ought to tell him his scruples and doubts in a modest manner; and if he cannot acquiesce in the explication given him, he is then to refer the matter to the college of overseers.

16. If a journeyman has thoughts of leaving his master, or if his circumstances and call should require a change, it is necessary, that previous, and as timely notice as possible be given to the master. On the other hand a master should not suddenly dismiss a journeyman, but if he thinks of keeping him no longer, he is to give him ordinarily eight or fourteen days warning, and previous to such notice on either side, it is to be mentioned to the college of overseers.

17. As to the apprentices, the overseers college is first of all thoroughly to enquire of the parents and teachers of the children, into their capacity, bodily strength, health, propensity and inclination, in order to give their advice touching such trade among us as they think best suited to the abilities of their mind and bodies. To this end an opportunity is to be given to the boys in the congregation to take a view of the manner of working in the different trades and businesses in the
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congregation, that their inclination and propensity may so much the better display itself.

18. If after such mature consideration, a trade is fixed upon for an apprentice, he shall then be put to the master upon a trial of one or two months, that within this time it may appear with still more certainty, whether a proper choice has been made; if after that time, there is solid ground to hope that the apprentice will work at the trade chosen for him with pleasure, and become an able workman, he shall be bound, or such agreement shall be made, as is found best before the college of overseers; and if circumstances will permit it, in the presence of his father, guardian, or nearest relations, his name shall be entered, and he, by the overseers college, shall be committed to his master as a child to his father, and the apprentice shall promise to his master filial obedience, diligence, and faithfulness: at the same time the apprentice-fee and particular conditions are to be settled in such a manner as to prevent all future misunderstanding. Besides that respect and obedience due from the apprentices to their masters, the former, when bound, are likewise to be admonished to promise unto and to act towards the journeymen, and particularly to him to whose instruction the master properly has committed him, with due subordination. And in case a master who takes an apprentice is free of any body corporate, particular care must be taken, that the apprentice is legally bound, that so he may, when out of his time, be able to enjoy the privileges he is thereby intitled to, if found necessary.

19. If

19. If a boy, after previous, mature consideration, and after the time of trial is elapsed, is actually bound to a trade, and he should afterwards discover a fickleness, dislike, or laziness, we will not hastily think of putting him to another trade till all trials have proved abortive; he is rather to be encouraged with meekness and patience, and through friendly and earnest representations, to overcome his dislike, and to continue at the trade he has once engaged in.

20. The college of overseers are to see to it, that justice be done touching the journeymen's wages, and the wages of labouring people in general among us, and are to inspect into the prices of the manufactured goods, particularly the prices of victualling; and they are in conjunction with the trades-conference, to make herein, from time to time, the necessary equitable regulations, and where regulations are or shall be made herein by the magistrates, the prices thus fixed are punctually to be observed.

21. A regulation having been made by us in former years that some brethren have been appointed to inspect the weights and measures used by those brethren and sisters, who carry on business of what kind soever, lest by neglect or otherwise there should be a defect therein, we hereby confirm the said regulation, and the said inspectors of weights are to examine at least once every year, and as often as the college of overseers shall find per to appoint them so to do, all the weights and measures in the place. And in case any member of the congregation should suspect the weight or measure of any thing he has bought in the place, he is to go to one

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of the inspectors of weights, and have it tried, and is not to speak of it to any other person to the prejudice of the seller, but have it rectified, in case it is found not to be full weight or measure. The college of overseers with the trades conference, is to watch carefully, lest at any time the congregation rules be infringed, and lest under any pretence and through mis-interpretation or a misapplication of the customs of tradesmen in other places any thing creep into our trades, which might be inconsistent with the essential character or the call of grace of a congregation.

Conclusion.

1. No one, whosoever he be, shall receive permission to live and settle in Fulneck, except he previously acknowledge, and heartily consent to this our brotherly agreement concerning all the established congregation principles and regulations, and to the sacred and inviolable compliance therewith, he shall bind and oblige himself, either by giving his hand, or in case he would make a settlement here, as the head of a family in the congregation, or work here as a master, by personally subscribing his name to this agreement. To this end the overseers college is to lay these congregation regulations before each, who desires such permission, leaving him time thoroughly to weigh and consider them, that thus he may be able to take his resolution accordingly, and with a clear understanding of, and a full insight into, all those points, which the congregation has agreed and bound themselves unto,

2. Although

2. Although by the said agreement the different temporal ranks and stations as ordained of God, shall not be infringed upon, but continue in their dignity: yet no person, of whatsoever rank and dignity he may be, shall have permission to live here without adopting and observing these our congregation regulations and rules.

3. In order to keep these congregation regulations in continual remembrance, they not only shall be printed, and a copy thereof, when printed, be delivered unto each housefather, master and overseer, as well as unto each labourer and servant of the congregation, but, they shall also be read publicly in the congregation at least once a year.

4. If in time to come, and for the good of the congregation, it should be thought necessary, on account of a change of circumstances, to make additions to, or alterations in, these congregation regulations: then such additions or alterations, when agreed unto, shall be of the same force and equally binding, as though the same were, word for word, inserted in this Brotherly Agreement and compact.

Now whereas all the preceding declarations, regulations, rules and orders as the foundation and summary of all our hitherto and newly established congregation constitution, were maturely weighed by the congregation council, together with all the labourers and servants of this congregation, being thoroughly convinced of the necessity and expediency thereof, and whereas we have owned and voluntarily received and with sincere hearts adopted them.

Therefore all and each of us promise and vow to each other for the sake of the Lord, and through his grace, desirably to adhere to, and faithfully and conscientiously abide by them. We do also, by these presents empower the congregation direction or elder's conference, for the time being, to maintain the same sacredly and without respect of persons, so that each and all the inhabitants and members of the congregation, do act and live conformably thereto, and that all those, who should be so unfortunate as wilfully to act contrary to, or even to be unmindful of these our congregation regulations may be treated according to the rules and measures therein fixed and established.

In witness hereof, this Brotherly Agreement and compact is signed by all the house-fathers, masters, and others in office, as also by the labourers and servants of the congregation; likewise in the names of the widows and single sisters-choirs by their helpers, servants, and their curators, which was done and executed at Fulneck in the public congregation, &c.

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